

InterTradelreland success speaks for itself.

InterTradelreland was set up six years ago by the governments of Ireland and the UK with the aim of increasing business co-operation across the island to the mutual benefit of both economies.

Of course, the bottom line for any business person is: "What exactly can InterTradelreland do for me?" and here the organisation's track record in tangible support is unquestionable.

The Acumen sales and marketing support programme helps to stimulate cross-border trade by helping small businesses to identify and develop new contacts, achieve sales and build new sustainable business. It has helped 238 companies to create 216 new jobs and secured an increase in €30m in cross-border sales since 2003.

IT OFFERS:

Consultancy Support – 50% of the cost of the consultancy up to a maximum of €8,500, with Acumen paying 4,250 and the company paying the balance (the consultancy period can be spread over a six to 12 month period).

Salary Support – assisting with the employment of a dedicated sales person in the target market over a one-year period by funding 50% of the first year's taxable salary up to a maximum of €17,000.

Prospector Support – 50% of the total cost of a Prospector assignment lasting no longer than 12 months, up to a maximum of €8,500 with a net contribution of €4,250. The make-up of the support can be 50% of recruitment/selection advertising eligible costs up to €2,125 and 50% for product familiarisation and market canvass costs up to €2,125.

FUSION, the technology transfer programme, has helped 200 companies develop new products and processes and generated more than €43m of additional business by developing partnerships between companies with a technology need on one side of the border, and colleges or universities that can provide the required specialist expertise, on the other side. This figure is expected to increase significantly as projects complete and realise their full potential over the coming years.

A high calibre graduate is then employed by the company to spearhead a project for a period of up to two years. The graduate acts as the link and agent of technology transfer between the university and the company.

InterTradelreland will provide a support package worth up to €71,625 towards the costs of carrying out a technology related project which is central to a company's development needs.

Innova supports cross-border research and development co-operation and has helped eight company partnerships create products, processes or services projected to yield multi-million pound results.

Eligible projects can fall into two categories: industrial research and pre-development activities. Industrial research involves acquiring new knowledge that may be useful in developing new products, processes or services. Pre-development activities involve using industrial research to plan new or improved products, processes or services. Individual companies or companies acting in collaboration with companies in the other jurisdiction can apply for support. InterTradelreland may provide grant aid of up to €195,000 per company, with rates complying with the relevant EU R&D guidelines.

InterTradelreland also supports the development of all-island business networks, helps early stage/start ups to raise equity finance and improves the ability of companies to tender for public sector business North and South work approximately €17 billion annually.

Each year, around 350 companies participate in our all-island business development programmes to improve their competitive performance. The total trade and business development value reported by them since 2003 is €156m.

The economic benefits of working together in Ireland to increase efficiency and global competitiveness



Alan Berry, managing director of Marcon Computations, an environmental consultancy and software development company based in Galway
Pic : Andrew Downes photography

are now generally welcomed and accepted – InterTradelreland is at the vanguard of making that possible for businesses across the island.

Alan Berry, managing director of Marcon Computations, an environmental consultancy and software development company based in Galway, says:

"FUSION has been extremely influential in driving our aquaculture business forward and creating a range of new opportunities for us.

"Our FUSION graduate, Tomasz Dabrowski, had just completed a PHD in Computation and Numerical Modelling when he started with us. He was the most qualified candidate and his background made him the perfect match to complete our project.

"The project we wanted to develop was a computer desktop programme that demonstrates and assesses how the water quality in different areas changes and how these changes affect shellfish production. There is currently no product in the market like this.

"It allows clients to select, on a map, areas of a lough and discover the best areas for growing shellfish. Tomasz has been so good that we have actually now offered him a permanent job with us."

As well as having Tomasz, FUSION also partnered the company with Queen's University Belfast's Centre for Marine Resources & Mariculture (C-Mar). This partnership has proved to be an invaluable resource.

Alan says: *"C-Mar was able to offer us numerous years experience in the aquaculture environment. While Marcon's background is predominantly engineering, C-Mar's lies in marine biology. We benefited greatly from their knowledge and resources and by linking the two areas of expertise we had the perfect combination to develop our product.*

"While the software is still in the development stage, a number of parties such as the Irish Fishery Board and Aquacultural co-ops in the area have shown great interest in it as a weapon to optimise their shellfish production.

"I would definitely recommend FUSION to other companies. It is an extremely well managed, professional programme and we have seen very positive results. The software that has been developed as a result of the programme has offered us a number of new business opportunities."

For more information on all InterTradelreland's programmes and networks, please contact

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